



## An Analysis of the Symbolic Meaning on Tijak Tanah Tradition in Malay Society

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### Abstract

This study aims to describe the symbolic meanings that exist in the Tijak Tanah tradition and the procession of the Tijak Tanah tradition in the Malay community in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency. The data sources for this research are the elders in Sungai Nanjung Village, people who usually recite Al-Barzanji, traditional leaders, two communities who have carried out the Tijak Tanah tradition and village staff in Sungai Nanjung Village. Retechniques used for the data collection were interview, observation and documentation methods. The results of the research showed that in the Tijak Tanah tradition the symbols used had meanings such as the sugar cane house symbol which has a meaning as a substitute for baby's feet and hands, but has a meaning to attach illness, coconut water and scissors mean that children are not weak in spirit, 12 eggs mean the spirit of a baby paid for with money, beads mean a form of beauty, and scattered rice means gratitude. The procession for the Tijak Tanah tradition is divided into 3 processes, namely the initial, core and final processes. The initial process is to prepare everything needed for the event, The main process is the top event when the baby is cut into his hair so that his feet are planted on the ground. The final process is reading prayers and eating together.

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country that is rich in cultural diversity found in each of its respective regions. This cultural diversity creates many benefits for the many cultures that exist in Indonesia. Every ethnic group in Indonesia must have their own traditions and culture that are different between ethnic groups, one of which is the Malay ethnicity. Malay ethnicity is one of the tribes in Indonesia. Malay ethnicity is spread throughout Indonesia, especially Sumatra and Kalimantan (Araminta, W, B., Agnes, O, F., Hadipraja, M., & Isnaeniah, 2017). Traditions and culture that exist in the Malay ethnic group are symbols that exist in a group of people and then become an identity for that group of people.

Culture is the development of the plural form "cultivation" and claims to mean the power of the mind and the power of reason (Ramadhan, I., Firmansyah, H., & Wiyono, 2022). He then formulates the definition of culture as a whole culture and work. Or culture is everything that has ever been produced by humans as a result of their thoughts and actions. So, culture is man-made and carried out or carried out by the man himself. In general, culture is the result of human creation which aims to process adaptation and mastery of its environment (Nurmaning, 2022).

Culture is regulated in Article 32 of 1945 Law, regarding the existence of culture which reads "the government is advancing Indonesian national culture". Tradition is also defined as culture or customs. So, the Indonesian nation is a nation that has diverse traditions, (Januardi, A., Superman, S., & Firmansyah, 2022). The *Tijek Tanah* tradition ceremony is one of the cultures or customs that are still strongly carried out by the Ketapang Malay community, especially those who are Muslim. The ground trail event is usually held when the baby is 40 days old or a year old at the most. Before this traditional ceremony is carried out, the child is not allowed to step on the ground. This is a prohibition or taboo for the Ketapang Malay community.

Traditions are habits that are inherent in the daily life activities of certain groups of people and regulate the way of life and life of these people (Hasnidar, Sibarina, R., Sinar, S., 2021). Traditions passed down from ancestors as cultural heritage, including creations, human works and beliefs passed down from one generation to the next. Every region in Indonesia must have a diverse culture and maintain differences. Traditions in society are part of the customs that are born from the habits of society, (Rofiq, 2019). So, tradition is a habit carried out by humans from the past until now. Likewise with the *Tijek Tanah* tradition which has become a habit for the people in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency which has made this *Tijek Tanah* tradition a habit that has not been abandoned until now.

The history of the emergence of the entry into this village originates from the Hulu Sampit or Hulu Air people who then immigrated to the Nanjung River and in the end became attached to a Malay tradition in Sungai Nanjung Village. However, this tradition of tracing the ground does not solely belong to the Malay tribe in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency. The tradition of groundbreaking also exists in various other tribes, one of which is the Sundanese, it's just that the terms or names used differ according to the names in each area.

Based on the results of pre-research on Thursday, January 27 2022, at 10:10 am the author interviewed community leaders who usually recite Al-Barzanji or who guide the procession of *Tijk Tanah*. The Tijk Tanah ceremony contains meaning for the baby so that the baby who will be carried out the Tijk Tanah ceremony becomes a useful human being for the family and society, but this meaning tends to be unknown to many people, (Kurniasih, P., Hanye, P., & Amir, 2015). He revealed that the *Tijk Tanah* tradition is a tradition for babies who cannot yet walk and are not allowed to set their feet on the ground before the *Tijk Tanah* tradition is carried out. According to his explanation, not all people know about the procession and the meanings contained in the *Tijk Tanah* tradition, sometimes people now just carry out traditions that have existed for a long time.

**Table 1.** Population Data for Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency 2021.

Number	Hamlet Name	Number of Neighborhood Units	Number of Family Cards	Number of parents who have babies who have carried on the tradition for the past 2 years
1.	Sungai Sembilang	1	74	3
		2	70	5
		3	77	4
		4	79	3
		5	119	2
2.	Tanjung Kurau	6	111	4
		7	76	3
		8	97	2
		9	128	5
		10	108	4
3.	Muara Keramat	11	67	2
		12	97	1

		13	72	3
		14	115	2
		15	32	3
amount	3	15	1322	46

**Source.** Sungai Nanjung Village Office Archives 2021

Based on the data above, everyone who has children or babies who are 40 days old or more always carries out the *Tijak Tanah* tradition. Then based on the interview with Mr. Sa, the preparation for carrying out the *Tijak Tanah* tradition is preparing a house made of sugarcane and many other things that must be prepared by the host who is holding the *Tijak Tanah* tradition to make symbols used in carrying out the tradition Soil Steps.

In this modern era, the *Tijak Tanah* tradition is still being maintained from generation to generation from their ancestors to their grandchildren, because they think that it is important to maintain a tradition so that it is not extinct or abandoned by the community, for them even though the era is modern, the tradition is must always be carried out in order to maintain the cultural heritage that has been passed down by the ancestors.

Thus, the *Tijak Tanah* tradition is made into the customs of the ancestors which must be maintained until now, even though those who carry it out sometimes do not know the meanings contained in the symbols used in the *Tijak Tanah* tradition. This is what then attracts interest to conduct research related to how the procession of *Tijak Tanah* is carried out and what are the symbolic meanings contained in each symbol used in the *Tijak Tanah* tradition itself.

## METHODS

The research on the analysis of the symbolic meaning of the *Tijak Tanah* tradition in the Malay community in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency uses a type of qualitative research with a descriptive method that will clearly and in detail describe the actual conditions in the field. The research location and source sought were reviewed directly in the field to fulfill the data sought, to be precise in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency. Data sources consist of primary and secondary (Sugiyono, 2018). Sources of data were taken from informants who have children less than 2 years old who have not carried out a survey, while the data collection technique used is to go directly to the field by looking in detail (Wiyono & Ramadhan, 2021). Starting from the beginning to the end of the implementation of the *Tijak Tanah* tradition, it is then continued by conducting in-depth

interviews with informants in order to obtain more robust data, as well as support from the documentation of the *Tijak Tanah* tradition itself.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### **The symbols in the *Tijak Tanah* tradition of the Malay Community in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency.**

The symbols that are always present in the *Tijak Tanah* tradition are the sugar cane house, the *tetijak* which is made from various kinds of food such as *dodol* and sweet rice and there is the *tetijak* filled with sand under the pulpit, this *tetijak* will later be placed under the sugarcane house, then there is the symbol of water coconut and scissors, 12 boiled eggs filled with money to be distributed to people when cutting hair, beads, and scattered rice.

The Meaning of the Symbols (cane house, *tetijak*, coconut water and scissors, 12 eggs, beads and scattering of rice) in the *Tijak Tanah* Tradition of the Malay Community in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency.

The symbolic meaning of the sugar cane house, *tetijak*, coconut water and scissors, 12 eggs, beads and scattered rice in the *Tijak Tanah* tradition. The first is the meaning of the sugar cane house, this sugar cane house has the meaning as a substitute for the feet and hands of the baby who will be stepping on the ground, which will later be fought over when stepping on the ground with the aim that the baby will not get sick, by fighting over the sugar cane house by people then it is assumed that the baby has no disease. The two meanings of *tetijak*, *tetijak* which is under the sugarcane house has the meaning to attach all the dirt or all the diseases that are in the baby, by putting the baby's feet into the pot which contains various types of attached food, all the dirt and diseases that are there will also disappear in babies. The three meanings of coconut water and scissors, the meaning of coconut water and scissors is to strengthen enthusiasm so that you don't get weak in spirit, coconut water and scissors are also used to cut the baby's hair. The four meanings of the 12 eggs, the meaning of the 12 eggs is that the spirit of the baby inside the egg is given to people who cut their hair, don't forget to be accompanied by the money in it which means to pay for the spirit of the baby so that he doesn't get sick. The five meanings of the beads, these beads have the meaning as a form of beauty or beauty, by decorating the baby's hair with beads it will look better. The six meanings of scattering rice, this scattering of rice means our gratitude for the celebration that has been carried out because with this event it means that our children can already set their feet on the ground.

### The procession of the *Tijak Tanah* tradition takes place from beginning to end

The initial procession of carrying out the land survey is preparing all the materials or land surveying needs. Such as making a sugar cane house, preparing all the steps, boiling eggs, preparing coconut and scissors which are placed in one container, buying beads to hang on the baby's hair, and preparing a container containing rice and coins and candy in it to scatter the rice. The main process begins in the morning when the child is first bathed with safe prayer water, then these beads are attached to the baby's hair. When the reading of Al-Barzanji begins, the event begins. The baby will be taken out when the recitation of Al-Barzanji is already at the stage where people are standing, the baby will be taken out and will start with cutting his hair by the people who recite Al-Barzanji and the parents. After that, the baby starts to step on the sugar cane house and the steps under it 7 times round, the last round is finished, the people will fight over the sugar cane house. Then the baby is brought back to the female guests in the kitchen, especially the grandmother or the elderly to cut the baby's hair. After finishing, the baby is then put his feet on the ground outside the house for the first time. Then the final process is reading prayers and eating together.

**Table 2.** Informant Data

Number	Name	Gender	Age	Religion	Position	Address
1.	H	Man	74	Islam	Elders Understand Tradition	RT 4
2.	Sa	Man	65	Islam	Al-Barzanji Readers	RT 1
3.	Us	Man	72	Islam	Traditional Leader	RT 6
4.	Su	Women	34	Islam	Housewife	RT 2
5.	En	Women	32	Islam	Housewife	RT 5
6	St	Man	35	Islam	For Goverment	RT 14

**Source:** Processed Data 2022

From the data presented in the table above, where there were 6 informants in this study, the 6 informants were ethnic Malays in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency.

## DISCUSSION

The symbols in the *Tijak Tanah* tradition of the Malay Community in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency.

Symbols are used and defined according to usage in social interaction. The symbol represents whatever the individual agrees with. Something can be said to be a symbol if there is something else contained in it (Sugiati, 2019). In line with the opinion above, the results of this study also reveal the symbols that exist and are used in the *Tijak Tanah* tradition. These symbols consist of a sugar cane house, *tetijak*, coconut water and scissors, 12 eggs, beads, and also a scatter of rice. Symbols are like objects, language, behavior patterns, colors or flavours that are given meaning by certain cultures and are a way for humans to relate their dependence on the outside world (Eko, 2015).

The symbols in the *Tijak Tanah* tradition are also signs that give something to other people because these symbols have meanings that refer to activities that are in accordance with the pattern of society or the beliefs of the local community. In line with that, it is like the symbol of a tree which is believed so that the disease that is in the baby will also come off when it is stepped on to that tree. This tradition has apparently a similarly cultural aspect with other traditions in West Kalimantan such as *Tepung Tawar* Ritual in which based on the findings of the research conducted by (Novita, S., Imran, Ramadhan, I., Sikwan I., Ismiyani, 2022), the latter tradition can be a saviour for children.

The purpose of carrying out this *Tijak Tanah* tradition is as a form of local community trust so that their children are protected from negative things that they believe will happen if this tradition is not carried out, besides that the purpose of carrying out this *Tijak Tanah* tradition is to preserve the culture that has existed since ancient times. as well as making this culture the identity of the Malay community in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency.

### **The Meaning of the Symbols (cane house, *tetijak*, coconut water and scissors, 12 eggs, beads and scattering of rice) in the *Tijak Tanah* Tradition of the Malay Community in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency**

The *Tijak Tanah* ceremony is one of the traditions that has been carried out from generation to generation, because the Malay people believe that if a child goes through the *Tijak Tanah* tradition, the child will be far from negative things or bad luck in his life. The *Turun Tanah* tradition for the children of the Malay community has stages where each stage actually has meaning (Sihombing, 2020). This tradition is a hereditary tradition that has existed for a long time and eventually became a habit that is not abandoned. The local community also believes that carrying out this tradition is an effort to keep their children from getting sick and away from other negative things. This is in line with the opinion of (Sihombing, 2020), above that the *Tijak Tanah* tradition is a hereditary tradition that has

existed for a long time and has finally become a habit that is not abandoned because they also believe that carrying out this tradition so that their children do not get sick and are far from other negatives.

In the Tijak Tanah tradition, all the meanings in each symbol lead to the belief that with these symbols babies are protected from unwanted diseases or misfortunes. As well as being a form of their gratitude to God. The symbols that exist in the *Tijak Tanah* tradition in the Malay community in Sungai Nanjung Village are also the same as the symbols in other villages because the village that neighbours Sungai Nanjung Village is also a large part of the Malay community.

### **The Process of Carrying Out the *Tijak Tanah* Tradition in the Malay Community in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency**

The implementation of the *Tijak Tanah* tradition is through several processions starting from the initial procession, namely the preparatory stage, the main and final procession. In addition, the stages in carrying out the *Tijak Tanah* tradition are also very important, because by knowing the stages of *adat*, someone who carries out this custom will more easily understand and prepare important things to prepare for the *Tijak Tanah* tradition.

According to Murniatmo (In Sari, 2018) the tradition of Tijak Tanah is a ceremony when a child descends to the ground for the first time, or it is also called *mudhun* weak or download, the community thinks that the land has supernatural powers, besides that there is also an ancient assumption that the land is guarding. Therefore, the child is introduced to the guardian of the land so as not to get angry and disturb the child. If the guardian of the land gets angry, it means disaster will befall the child.

The initial series of processes from *Tijak Tanah* are where the host who is holding the event prepares all kinds of equipment such as making a sugar cane house, preparing the stalks, coconut water and also scissors to cut the baby's hair to prepare food for the guests. Then the main process is when the recitation of Al-Barzanjii is already at the stage when people stand up, the baby will first cut his hair by the people who recite Al-Barzanji, then after that the baby will be stepped into the sugarcane house 7 times round, the last round of the sugar cane house will be contested by the guests, then the baby's hair will be cut again by the female guests, then finally the baby will be stepped on the ground outside the house for the first time. While the process was finally closed with a prayer reading and also eating together. The results of this research are also in accordance with research (Sari, 2018), regarding the series of *Tijak Tanah* traditions carried out in accordance with the provisions from the beginning to the end, starting from preparing all the needs of the event to the



cutting event and also setting the baby's feet on the ground for the first time with the aim introduce the baby to the environment, and end with reading a prayer and eating together.

## CONCLUSION

The symbols in the *Tijak Tanah* tradition of the Malay community in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency, include the symbol of a sugarcane house, *tetijak*, coconut water and scissors, 12 eggs, beads and scattering of rice. The symbolic meaning contained in the *Tijak Tanah* tradition in the Malay community in Sungai Nanjung Village, Ketapang Regency, namely there are six symbolic meanings, among others, the sugarcane house which means the feet and hands of the baby which will later be fought over so that it does not get sick, the *tetijak* which means to attaching the disease in the baby to this point, coconut water and scissors which have a meaning to harden the spirit of the baby as well as scissors as a baby's hair clipper, 12 eggs mean the spirit of the baby in this egg is paid with money so it doesn't get sick, beads bead which means beauty and beauty and finally scattered rice which means gratitude. The process of carrying out the *Tijak Tanah* tradition has 3 series of processions, namely the initial procession stage is preparing all the necessities such as making sugar cane houses, making *tetijak*, preparing coconut water and scissors, preparing boiled eggs for distribution, buying beads and also rice which is put into in a bowl for scattering rice. Then, the main process, namely bathing the baby first with safe prayer water, taking the baby out when reciting Al-Barzanji at the standing stage accompanied by cutting the hair and then stepping the baby into the cane's house and the *tetijak* below 7 times round then the cane is fought over by children and adults, then cutting the baby's hair which is cut by female guests, especially grandmothers and then ending with the baby's feet stepping on the ground outside the house for the first time. While the final process/closing, namely by reading prayers and also eating together.

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